

A
PROPOSAL
Humbly Offered
FOR THE
FARMING
OF
LIBERTY
OF
CONSCIENCE,

Printed in the Year , 1663.

PROPOSAL

Handy Offer

THE

FAMILY

LIBRARY

CONSCIENCE

1860

take up a reproach against us, as Persons reprobated into a unpossibilty of Submission to Principles of Concord, Peace, and Unity in Church or State: never being able hitherto to come to any consistency amongst our selves: The Ark of God having for twenty years together been exposed to by-ways, streets, and worse places, for want of an agreement amongst our own Brethren where to rest it, or how to entertain it. If this be our Case, and could we secure of so much favour as *Saul* once desired of *Samuel*, that the Bishops would but honour us before the people, We would in a private Christian way lay our hands upon our hearts, and acknowledge the hand of God, and the justice thereof, in turning us out of his Vineyard, as wicked and unprofitable Servants, and to suffer the iniquity of our heels to overtake us; crying out with Reverend Mr. *Calamy*, *The Ark of God is justly departed from us*; but being not yet thus assured, do hope the people will yet believe these to be only Bears-skins lapt about us by Episcopal hands: And therefore to the end that a Consistency, and Oneness, of Judgement of the whole separating Brethren, and their moderation may be known unto all men, and that the World may know that there is a Spirit of Rule and Government resting in us;

It is humbly proposed that the Sole Power of granting Licences and Indulgences for Liberty of Conscience, within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Barwick, may be vested in the Persons under named for the term of seven years, under the Farm Rent of an Hundred Thousand Pounds per Annum. to Commence from the twenty fifth day of March next, under such Rates and Qualifications as are hereafter specified;

The

The Names of the Grand Commis-
sioners and Farmers of *Liberty of*
Conscience; proposed on yesterday,
being Monday, *March 2. 1662.* be-
ing the day of a private Fast, kept
by Mr. *Calamy*, Mr. *Baxter*, and o-
thers, at Mr. *Beal's* house, near my
Lord of *Ely's* Chappel in *Holborn*.

Mr. *Edmond Calamy*
Mr. *Tilham*, late of *Colchester*.
Mr. *Philip Nye*
Mr. *Peake*
Mr. *Stanley of Dorchester*.

George Fox, Executor of the
last Will and Testament
of *James Nailor* deceased.

Doctor Lazarus Seaman

Mr. *Dell*, late of *Cambridge*.

Doctor Owen

Mr. *Bryan*, late of *Coventry*.

Mr. *Matthew Mead*

Mr. *John Coppin*

Doctor Manton

Mr. *Kiffen*

The Executor of Mr. *Ven-*
ner, lately Executed.

Mr. *Thomas Case*

Mr. *Reynor*, late of *Lin-*
coln.

Mr. *Ralph Venning*

Mr. *Rogers*

Mr. *Benn*, late of *Dorche-*
ster.

Mr. *George Griffith*, late of
Charter-house.

The Executor of *Hugh Peters*
lately Executed.

Mr. *George Newton*, late of
Taunton.

Mr. *Dan. Dyke*, late of *Hert-*
fordshire. Mr.

Mr. *William Jenkins*
 Mr. *Fisher*, late of *Kent*.
 Doctor *Thomas Goodwin*
 Mr. *Hammond*, late of *New-*
castle.
 Mr. *Peter Sherry*
 Mr. *Bridges*, late of *Tar-*
mouth.
 Mr. *Joseph Carrill*
 Mr. *Tombes*, late of *Lein-*
ster.
 Mr. *Leigh*, late of *Lambard-*
street.

Mr. *Mays*, late of *Kingslan*.
 Mr. *Joshua Sprigg*.
 Mr. *Henry Joffey*.
 Mr. *Newcomen* of *Deasbam* in
Essex.
 Doctor *Tackney* of *Cam-*
bridge.
 Doctor *Cornelius Barges*
 Mr. *Zachary Croston*
 Doctor *Holmes*
 Mr. *John Cunn*
 Mr. *Thomas Brooks*.

That the Persons aforesaid may be constituted Grand Commissioners, and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience within the Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick*, and may be impowred to set up one publick Office within the City of *London*, and to nominate and elect a convenient number of Registers Clerk, and other Officers: And for the more certainty of all Certificates to be granted as is hereafter appointed, The said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may form a common Seal to be known, and called by the common name of *The Publique Seal of the Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience* engraven, *An Ass without Ears, Braying*, with this Motto encircled *Stat pro ratione libertas*: And the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, or any 24. of them in the said Office assembled, may from time to time, compound and agree for *Liberty of Conscience*, with any person or persons, under such Rates and Qualifications, as are hereafter specified.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, or any 24. of them, may constitute and appoint, under the Publique

Publicke Seal of the Office, Sub-Commissioners, and other Officers, for every County within the said Kingdom, not exceeding the number of 12. for each County, whereof 7. to be a *Quorum*, who may compound and agree for Liberty of Conscience, with any person or persons, select Congregations, Cities, Towns Corporate, Parishes, Hamlets, and Villages, by the great, or otherwise, within their respective Countries, not exceeding the Rates hereafter mentioned.

Rates to be observed in all Compositions for Liberty of Conscience.

A Presbyterian Minister

Per Annum.

5 0 0

A Ruling Elder

4 0 0

A Deacon

3 0 0

A Hearer Male or Female in Fellowship to

2 0 0

all Ordinances

A

A Common Hearer only	1 0 0
An Independent Pastor	3 0 0
A Teaching Elder	4 0 0
A Helper in Government	3 0 0
A Deacon	3 0 0
A Hearer male or female in Fellowship to all Ordinances	2 0 0
A common Hearer only	1 0 0
A Baptist admitted to the administration of all Ordinances	5 0 0
A Preaching assistant	4 0 0
An Elder in Office	3 0 0
A Deacon	3 0 0
A Hearer in Fellowship male or female to all Ordinances	2 0 0
A common Hearer only	1 0 0
A Fifth Monarcher admitted to hold forth	5 0 0
An Elder under the same administration	3 0 0
A Deacon under the same administration	3 0 0
A Hearer male or female in Fellowship ac- cording to the value of his or her Estate	
2 s. per l. per annum.	
A common Hearer male or female accord- ing to the value of his or her Estate	
per l. per annum.	
A speaking male Quaker	4 0 0
A speaking female Quaker	3 0 0
A common Quaker male or female	2 0 0

A Confessor	_____	6	0	0
A Seminary or Mass-Priest at large	_____	5	0	0
A private Mass-Priest	_____	4	0	0
A Roman Catholick in any other Order	_____	3	0	0
A Roman Catholick not in order Male or Female	_____	1	0	0

An Officer under any Administration not mentioned in the rates aforesaid being a Native of <i>England</i> , such only excepted as stand Conformable to the Church of <i>England</i>	_____	5	0	0
A common person under any Administration not mentioned in the rates aforesaid being a Native of <i>England</i> , such only excepted as stand conformable to the Church of <i>England</i>	_____	2	0	0

An Officer under any Administration whatsoever not a Native of <i>England</i> , except conformable to the Church of <i>England</i>	_____	10	0	0
A private person under any Administration whatsoever not a Native of <i>England</i> , except conformable to the Church of <i>England</i>	_____	5	0	0

Rates to be observed in compounding for Liberty of Conscience in the particulars following, viz.

For Liberty to assert the Popes Supremacy	_____	10	0	0
For Liberty to write, speak, or Preach against the Government as they shall be inwardly moved	_____	5	0	0
For liberty to keep on their Hats before Magistrates, or in Courts of Judicature	_____	2	0	0
For liberty to rail publicly against the Bishops and Common Prayer	_____	1	0	0
For liberty to refuse all manner of Oaths, of Allegi-	_____			

unice and Supremacy, or in cases Civil or Criminal	2	0	0
For liberty to deny Tythes and other Church Duties	1	0	0
For liberty to expound the Revelations and the Book of Daniel	1	0	0
For liberty to disturb any Congregation after Sermon	0	10	0
For liberty to assert the Solemn League and Covenant	1	5	0
For liberty to instruct youth in the short Catechism set forth by the Assembly of Divines	0	10	0

That any person or persons gifted for any the Particulars abovesaid, may have liberty therein, either as an *Itinerate*, in private or publique, at the Rates abovesaid.

That no person or persons be admitted to compound for *Liberty of Conscience*, until he or they have first taken and subscribed to the Solemn Protestation following, before the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, or their Sub-Commissioners respectively.

I A. B. do here solemnly protest, That I judge my self still bound by the Solemn League and Covenant, by the Engagement, by private Church-Covenant, or by any other Oath which I have taken ever since the year 1641. and that so far as with safety to my person and Estate I may, I will endeavour the utter extirpation of Episcopacy, and to the utmost of my power, will abet and promote all Schism, faction, and discord, both in Church and State, according to the best form and manner, prescribed and laid open in the Sermons of many of the Grand Commissioners and Farmers, before the Parliament, appointed to be Printed, and now called the Homilies of the separated Churches. And that I will never by what Condict of Authority soever, whether legal or Episcopall, ever consent to the Establish'd Doctrine and discipline of the Church of England.

And I do likewise believe, That Liberty of Conscience, was a precious, yet profitable talent committed to the Churches, and that it may be wisely Farmed out for advantage and improvement.

That

That no person within the Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, or Town of *Barwick*, may, from, and after the twenty fifth day of *March* next, use or exercise any manner of *Liberty of Conscience*, except persons standing conformable to the Church of *England*, untill such person or persons shall first take the Solemn Protestation, and shall compound with the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, for *Liberty of Conscience*, nor shall he be admitted or permitted to be a Speaker or Hearer, in any Meeting or Assemblies whatsoever.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of *Liberty of Conscience*, may have power to constitute under the Publick Seal of the said Office, a convenient number of Spiritual Gagers, who may have and exercise all such Powers, Priviledges, and Authorities, as the Gagers for Excise of Beer and Ale, have, or ought to have and enjoy, and may at any time, in case of Suspition, enter into any house or place, publick or private, to Gage and try the Spirits and Affections of any person or persons; And by Praying, Preaching, or other good Exhortation, dissuade from Episcopacy, and the Common-Prayer, the better to fit and prepare them to compound for *Liberty of Conscience*.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of *Liberty of Conscience*, may have power to fine any person or persons (not exceeding the sum of twenty pound for every offence, who shall after Composition for *Liberty of Conscience*, and subscribing the Solemn Protestation, be present in any Church or Chappel, within the Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Barwick*, in the time of any part of Divine Service, unless at the Funeral of his Father, or some other like occasion, he shall either respond, be uncovered, or carry himself reverently, in the time of Divine Service aforesaid.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of

Liberty of Conscience, or any twenty four of them assembled at the Office aforesaid, may have and exercise a Jurisdiction of Appeal in all matters relating to *Liberty of Conscience*, within the said Kingdom of *England*, and shall have a conclusive power in all matters brought before them, by way of Appeal as aforesaid.

That for the better management of all such matters as shall be brought judicially before the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of *Liberty of Conscience*, by way of Appeal the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, shall have power to constitute and appoint Mr. *Oliver St. Johns*, and such others as they judge fit for their said Service, to be of Standing-Council with the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers: And the said Mr. *Oliver St. Johns*, being so constituted and appointed under the Publick Seal of the said Office, shall, and may be exempted and discharged from being in any Publick Office, or place of Trust or Profit, for the said term of seven Years, any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

That if any person or persons shall happen to be proceeded against in any of the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Bishops of this Kingdome for Contumacy, for Non-Conformity, for non-payment of Tythes, and other Church-Duties, for publick rayling against the Bishops, the Common-Prayer, or the Government of the Church of *England*, or shall speak Opprobriously or Scandalously against the Doctrine or Discipline thereof, as Antichristian, or shall maintain any Positions or Doctrines contrary therunto: Every such person producing a Certificate from the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers under the publick Seal of the said Office, that such person or persons are under Composition for *Liberty of Conscience*, shall actually be discharged, and all further proceedings stayed; Any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

That if any persons shall happen to be Indicted or Criminally

minally proceeded against in any of His Majesties Courts at Westminster, or elsewhere within the Kingdom of England, either for Treasonable Speeches or Practices, for publick rayling at the Government, or for Scandalous words against either or both Houses of Parliament, or for Transgressing any of the Penal Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom; Every such person or persons, producing a Certificate from the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers under the publick Seal of the said Office, that such person or persons are under Composition for Liberty of Conscience; and that such words or practices were not spoken or acted maliciously, but were only the natural and proper effects and product of Liberty of Conscience, shall be discharged, and all further proceedings stayed; Any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers of Liberty of Conscience, may have power from time to time to ordain Pastors, Elders, and Deacons, or any other Officers under any Administration whatsoever, by the laying on of the publick Seal of the Office: Which said Imposition of the said publick Seal being received with a Certificate, shall be as lawful an Ordination, as if every such person had received Imposition from the hands of the Presbytery, Any late Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may have power from time to time, to set apart dayes of publick Fasting, and Humiliation, and Thanksgiving; on which dayes it may be lawful for any person or persons appointed to Officiate before the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, to stir up the people to a holy Indignation against themselves, for having by their want of Zeal and Brotherly kindness one towards another, lost many precious enjoyments; and above all, the never to be forgotten Losse of the late Power and Dominion, which with the Expence of so much Blood and Rapine,
was.

was put into the hands of the Saints. And to take up for a Lamentation, and great thoughts of heart, the Divisions of *Ruben*. That having our Sacks full, such an evil spirit should be found in the midst of us, as to fall out by the way; might it have been with those that abode by the Stuff, as with those that went out to the Battle, it had not been with us as at this day. Some starting aside like a broken Bow, in the Year 48. others continue to bear the burthen and heat of the day untill 60. being harneſſ'd, did then turn their backs in the day of Battel; as was most sweetly handled at the Fast kept Yesterday at Mr. *Beale's*, by Mr. *Calamy*, Mr. *Baxter*, and others.

That the twentieth day of *April* next, commonly called *Easter-Munday*, be kept as a day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation, for a Blessing upon these Gospel-----Under-takings, and that Mr. *Edmond Calamy*, Mr. *Peter Sterry*, Doctor *Lazarus Seamon*, and Mr. *Feak*, be desired to carry on the Work of the Day in Prayer and Preaching, before the said Grand Farmers, and that the particulars following, be recommended to their consideration in the Work of the Day.

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| 1. To Bewail, | { | 1. All our Court Sins. |
| | | 2. Our Bishops Sins. |
| | | 3. Our Monk Sins. |
| | | 4. Our Common-Prayer Sins. |

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| 2. To Divert. | { | 1. Westminster-Hall Judgments. |
| | | 2. Our Old-Bayly Judgments. |
| | | 3. Our Tower-Hill Judgments. |
| | | 4. Our Charing-Croſs Judgments |
| | | 5. Our Tyburn Judgements. |

Lastly, For deliverance from the hand of *Dun*, that uncircumcised Philistine.

That the said Grand Commissioners, and Farmers of

of Liberty of Conscience, may have power to build Churches and Chappels in any place or places, except upon such Ground where Churches or Chappels do already stand, in regard of the inconvenience of setting up Altar against Altar; And forasmuch as the custom of reading some part of the holy Bible before Sermon, commonly called 1st. & 2d. Lessons hath been found fruitless, That therefore the said Grand Commissioners & Farmers may have power to appoint instead thereof, the Annual reading of those Sermons preached by many of the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers, before the Parliament, Upon special Occasions of Thanksgiving and Humiliation, from the year 1641. to the year 1648. Which said Sermons may be called the Homilies of the separating Churches.

That the said Grand Commissioners and Farmers may have power to require Mr. *Gilbert Millington*, and Mr. *Luke Robinson*, the lame Evangelist, to deliver up all such Articles, Orders, Books, Papers, and other Writings, as were transacted before the late Committee for plundered Ministers; and likewise, all such as were passed and transacted before Mr. *Philip Ney*, and some others of the now Grand Commissioners and Farmers, and heretofore called Commissioners of Spiritual Tryars, to the end, the said Articles, Orders, Books, and other Papers may be printed and published, and may be kept at the said Office upon Record for ever, and appointed to be the Book of Canons of the separated Churches.

All this being done, we may upon Scripture grounds expect, that the door of hope may yet be open to Us, and our children after Us, to see the travel of our Souls, and to set Us into the promised Land, and to reap some of those clusters of the Grapes of *Canaan*, which with so much labour and toyl of body and mind were planted, especially in the years of 1641, 42, 43, 44, 45. by many of Us, and other precious Saints and Ministers of the Gospel, who are since fallen asleep, and have, We hope, reaped the Fruits of those labours, the Lord having in that day

put

put a mighty Spirit into Us, and for Us in Watchmen upon the Towers of Israel, to cry mightily, Ourselves know, we are singly the Lord's arms, that those hearts breaking labours of ours, those King-destroying labours, those Kingdom-ming labours, those Gospel-planting labours, those Church-servicing labours, those soul-collecting labours of Ours, may never be forgotten, but may be written as with the point of a Diamond, upon the heart of the King, upon the hearts of the Bishops, upon the heart of the Parliament, and upon the hearts of all the people from Dan to Beersheba, that so in God's good time we may receive our Reward, seven fold more than we have sown, and all the Generations to come may hear and fear, and do more to likeably.

Soprano

G.C.